

Fiveways School

Governor Visits Policy



Policy Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
3 Yearly	November 2021	Sam Ensor	November 2024

Policy Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Malcolm Gulliver	<i>Richard</i>	1/12/21
Head Teacher	Swavek Nowakiewicz	<i>Swavek</i>	30/11/2021

Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
19/11/2021	Update and re-written to reflect SSE guidance from December 2020.

Purpose of Policy

The Governance Board has responsibility for the direction, policies and standards of the School and is accountable for its conduct and performance. Visiting the School is an excellent way to observe how it operates on a day-to-day basis, but all visits should be focussed and relate to the priorities in the School Development Plan (SDP). Governors should report back their findings, thus helping the whole board and its committees to make better informed judgements about the progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the SDP and informing strategic decision making.

The Headteacher, who has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school, will guide the Board on the areas of the curriculum, policies and SDP to be covered during visits. The policy and protocol for School visits is formulated in consultation with the staff.

Annual programme of visits

The Governance Board will organise a programme of visits with the help of the Headteacher. These should be spread throughout the year, with the aim to achieve a minimum of one visit per term. In addition, new Governors will make a general introductory school visit as part of their induction programme.

Purpose of visit

The focus of a visit could be on any policy in place in the school, e.g., teaching and learning, assessment, behaviour, curriculum subjects. It could also focus on a particular area, such as the management of the school's resources, the condition of the buildings, safeguarding, a particular year group or class.

Potential benefits

To Governors:

- To recognise and celebrate success of pupils and staff
- To build an effective relationship with the staff and a better understanding of the context in which they work
- To get to know the pupils
- To develop understanding of different teaching approaches
- To monitor policies in action
- To inform decision making
- To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them

To Teachers:

- To share successes, achievements and developments
- To ensure Governors understand the reality of the classroom
- To get to know Governors
- To understand better the Governors roles and responsibilities
- To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
- To highlight the need for particular resources

What a visit is not about

- Making judgements on the quality of teaching or professional expertise of the teacher, this is the role of the Headteacher
- Checking on progress of individual pupils
- Pursuing personal interests and concerns
- Monopolising school/teacher time

Protocols for visits

Governors should, with the guidance of the whole Board and Head teacher, identify an aspect of the school's priority within the SDP to focus upon. This will help to maximise the effectiveness of the Governance Board team.

When organising and conducting a visit Governors will be courteous and considerate, respecting the professional roles of the Headteacher and staff. Working to the annual schedule agreed with the Head and staff, they will confirm in advance with the Headteacher the date, timing and focus of each visit. This will include agreeing what will be observed, whom it would be useful to talk to and agreeing any protocols to be observed whilst in the school. If time permits, they will discuss the proposed agenda with any staff involved. They will prepare by reading relevant documentation and guidance.

At the end of each visit, the Governor will discuss what they have observed with the teacher and/or member of staff concerned to clarify any points they are uncertain about. Comments should be limited to the focus of the visit. Governors visiting must not make personal judgements or promises on behalf of the Governance Board. They will discuss their observations with the Headteacher and agree how and when they will report to the Board on the visit.

See appendix 1 for a checklist regarding Governor visits to school and appendix 2 for the form to record and report back to the Board on visits.

Teachers and support staff will be courteous and considerate, recognising the contribution made by the Governance Board to the school. They will make practical suggestions on the focus for Governors visits to ensure that they are productive and enjoyable for all concerned. This will include specifying the evidence that could be shared with the Board.

Questions will be invited from Governors whilst being sensitive to issues of confidentiality.

Monitoring and evaluation of implementation and impact.

Governors visits will be an agenda item at the termly meeting of the Board. At the final meeting of each academic year the Link Governor will report the number of visits conducted and the areas of focus. The Board will evaluate the extent to which visits have informed whole Board understanding of the school's work. Staff Governors will feedback from colleagues and describe the extent to which staff's understanding of the Board's role has been enhanced.

The Board can then consider:

- Are the visits achieving the potential benefits identified?
 - What worked well?
 - Have there been any unexpected benefits?
 - How can we make our practice even better?
- and make changes to the policy and protocol that may be required.

4 Appendix 1 Checklist for Governor visits to school (Answer Y/N)

Before	
Is there a policy for governors visits which has been shared with staff?	
Is the purpose of the visit clear?	
Is it linked to the School Development Plan or Ofsted Action plan?	
Has the agenda been discussed with the Headteacher well in advance?	
Is there a prompt/checklist agreed by Governors and relevant members of staff to guide the visit?	
Have arrangements been agreed with any staff involved?	
Are Governors clear about the purpose of the visit?	
Has the Headteacher or relevant member of staff been asked about whether any supporting information is available such as performance data, lesson plan, action plan etc.?	
During	
Are visits punctual?	
Is the agreed timetable followed, though flexible where necessary?	
Are members of staff clear about the purpose of the visit?	
Do Governors with prior agreement from the teachers get involved with the pupils?	
Is everyone clear that these visits are for learning and not for inspection?	
Is the visit carried out without disrupting the lesson?	
Are visits courteous, friendly and non-judgemental?	
Is the purpose of the visit kept in mind?	
After	
Is what you have learnt discussed with the teachers?	
Are any unclear points discussed?	
Do Governors and members of staff involved agree the purpose of the visit has been achieved?	
Is the feedback form completed as soon as possible after the visit while thoughts are still fresh?	
Are observations discussed with the Headteacher?	
Is the feedback form circulated to the Headteacher and staff involved?	
Can Headteacher and staff add comments or amend as necessary?	
Is the feedback form/report shared with the rest of the Board?	



GOVERNOR SCHOOL VISITS

GOVERNOR NAME:

DATE:

PURPOSE OF VISIT

Tick or highlight as applicable

CURRICULUM

STAFFING

PREMISES

FINANCE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
GROUP

LEARNING WALK

GOVERNOR WEEK

OTHER

FOCUS OF VISIT

MEETING WITH

OUTCOMES & FEEDBACK TO GOVERNING BODY

Brief bullet points are fine

ACTION POINTS *As appropriate, please be as specific as possible & identify how these will be followed up*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

SIGNED:

DATE: